

DRAFT

Paid parking has been a major item in the news lately and, despite its lack of popularity with U.S. Government employees, is a program that has been instituted by the Administration as an energy conservation measure. Through this program, the President intends to conserve fuel and reduce both traffic congestion and air pollution. There is no question in these inflationary times that any program that adds expense creates another burden for the employee. The President's goals, however, are in the interest of all of us and are deserving of support.

There has been much confusion in the press over this Agency requesting an exemption from fees for our employees serving at Headquarters and at the outlying buildings on the basis of our rural environment and lack of suitable mass transportation. Such a request was forwarded to OMB but not granted. As a result, charges have been established, as stated in a recent Headquarters Notice, for those areas where GSA has assessed the relative value of parking in excess of \$10.00 per month. While parking for Headquarters was not assessed above this threshold this year, projected reassessments effective 1 October 1980 may require charging the minimum \$10.00 fee at that time.

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Parking fees have long been part of life for Agency employees assigned to the Rosslyn area and the Chamber of Commerce Building. Frequently, it has been suggested that fees be paid at all of our buildings to share the burden with all employees. Under the guidelines established for the paid-parking program, an agency may not subsidize one area at the expense of another since this action encourages the continued use of private vehicles and is contrary to the intent of the program.

Obviously, carpooling is a means of reducing individual cost by sharing expense. Additional savings result from reduced use of personal vehicles, and the net results contribute to reaching the President's energy-saving goals. While employees must pay a prorated share for parking space assigned to carpools, preference is given to such groups in assignment of space.

I realize that the assessment of fees causes hardship, but it is a program where the Agency shares the burden nationwide. It is difficult to administer equitably, but I believe that GSA and the Agency are responding in a fair and responsible manner. I solicit your cooperation and support in the implementation and operation of the program.